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The Farm of the Unseen Hands.*

BY JOHN KENNETH TURNER.

IT was the only rabbit I had seen in an hour and I was determined to dodge along in his wake for a mile, if necessary, to get a shot at him. The only thing that worried me was that he might flatten himself behind a clump of bunchgrass and that I'd never get sight of him again, or that he might make for that field of wild sunflowers to the right and successfully lose himself from me there.

I didn't need that rabbit one bit. If I should kill him and take him back to the farm my hostess wouldn't think of cooking him, and if she should cook him I wouldn't think of eating him. California folks invariably make a wry face when you speak of eating jack-rabbits.

And yet there I was, crawling along the ground on all fours, cautiously poking my head up every few yards to keep track of my quarry, sweating like a coolie, working harder than I would work in days and days back in the city. Ah, well, after all, that's what I'd come to the country for. But how scarce the game was hereabouts, especially for a district where farmhouses were never nearer than a half mile apart!

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Sure enough, B'rer Rabbit, mildly suspicious of the strange animal crawling clumsily among the bunch-grass, ambled leisurely over toward the right and, leaving the pasture, passed under a couple of fences and into the heavy stand of tall sunflowers in the field beyond. I cursed my luck, but scrambled to my feet and followed. Plunging in among the yellow-haired maidens of the weed folk, I threshed about a bit, then suddenly my feet touched fresh earth and I found myself on the edge of a plowed field. That sunflower strip was not more than fifty feet across.

Eagerly I looked about for the long-eared fugitive, but saw him not. In the field, two hundred yards distant, a plow team was at work. At my first glance I noticed nothing peculiar about it. At the second I gasped in amazement. Great Jehoshaphat! The team had no driver!

"A plow team working without a driver — that certainly beats me!" I muttered, after a long stare in which I entirely forgot my rabbit. "When I was a youngster on the farm I prided myself on having the best trained team in the universe. Used to go to sleep on the plow regularly, but I never could have left them and gone off fishing."

As I gazed across the expanse of freshly turned sod, the plow came to a corner. It was a gang plow, drawn by six horses, and the instant the foremost shear cut through to the cross furrow the six halted, the off leader bumped into his mate and, shoving to the left, swung the team about. A quarter of a minute later they were moving in perfect order down the field, the shears as true to the furrow as if I had set them myself!

"Well done!" I exclaimed. "Off leader, you're a wonder. I'd bet my hat you're a retired circus plug who's been educated to the science and art of agriculture in your old age. Say, what a hot grape-vine story that 'ud make for the Sunday Journal!"

As I watched, the six bent forward in their collars, pulling steadily and evenly, their heads bobbing up and down like pump handles, putting as much vim into their task as if a driver were actually behind, urging them forward with whip and voice.

Suddenly I noticed that one of the six was beginning to lag. Then an astonishing thing happened. The lagging animal plunged forward in the harness, as if in terror of a hissing whip-lash. The

next instant a large clod struck and crumbled upon the horse's flank!

Right then I decided that I preferred the other side of that jungle of sunflowers. In one jump I was in the midst of them and in about two more I was over the fence. Then I decided that I was cross-eyed and a fool, that I hadn't seen anything queer at all. Back I went, but this time I was careful to crouch low and stop as soon as I could see between the tall green stalks and into the field beyond. Funny, isn't it, how a man is scared half to death by the mere sight of something he can't explain?

Well, that clod stunt was no dream. I saw it repeated, as plain as the nose on your face, and this time I caught sight of the clod as it flew through the air, hurled, apparently, from a spot alongside the plow. More than that, a minute later I saw the team halt suddenly between corners, then, just as suddenly, pricking up their ears as if at a word of command, the horses started briskly forward again.

Arctic chills playing hide and seek along the hills and hollows of my spine and each particular hair of my head developing a surprising ambition to stand alone, I again hurried back through the sunflower screen, climbed the fence and slunk along beside it. I was in what is known to farmers as a devil's lane, a path scarcely four feet wide dividing the properties of neighbors not neighborly enough to pool interests in the building of a barrier. As I slunk I held a fierce debate with myself as to whether to break and run like all possessed, or to go back, boldly cross the field and see for myself at close range what in blazes was throwing clods at those driverless horses. As a compromise while the debate was raging, I held my gun, full-cocked, at a ready angle and glanced backward over my shoulder at every other step.

It was odd how thick those sunflowers grew along the fence at my left, and how the fringe extended as far as I could see. It was singular, too, how many signs were posted hinting of sudden and dreadful calamity to trespassers. Trespassers! One wouldn't expect to see a stranger strolling this way as often as once a year. The ranch was a lonely one, being set back against a river and nearly surrounded by pasture lands; it was certainly well situated for the long concealment of unusual practices of any sort.

Finally my inordinate curiosity — a characteristic which has caused me to make a fool of myself many a time, but which is a valuable asset in my trade, newspaper work — led me to again brave the weed forest at my left.

I discovered that I had traveled beyond the limits of the plowed lot and was now facing a field sweet with the scent of new-mown hay. Like giant beehives the shocks of hay dotted the field, while in the centre a stack was growing. Afar a hay-wagon, drawn by four horses, was gathering up the hay-cones. I could see no workmen, but supposed that they were on the far side of the wagon.

Soon the loaded wagon swung around and started for the stack, and then I observed that no driver was upon the high seat.

"Great Barnums! More circus horses!" I exclaimed.

But even as I spoke the lines were drawn taut, a whip-stock flourished in the air and a long lash writhed like a snake above the backs of the four. On the instant the team broke into a trot. Was the atmosphere playing me mad pranks? Or had I been suddenly assailed by a strange and bewildering affliction of the eyes?

Executing a neat turn the team slid the wagon-bed snugly against the side of the stack. Then my eyes nearly dropped from their sockets. Two pitch-forks raised themselves on top of the load and, with easy, natural strokes, began tossing the hay on to the stack. On the summit of the stack a third fork was in action, shifting a bit of hay here, spreading a tangle there, building up the stack in another place. Nowhere could I see a human being. The hands that gripped the helves of those nimble forks were invisible to me. I stayed to look no more. Choking in the clutch of a nameless terror, I stampeded through the sunflowers, crossed the devil's lane into the pasture and tore madly in the direction of the farm at which I boarded.

I ran crazily as long as my breath would let me and then I stopped. My boarding place was still a mile away. Moreover, I would make myself ridiculous by dashing breathless and wild-eyed into the presence of the farmer and his family. It was very likely that I had gone insane — that my much needed respite from the demands of newspaper life had come too late — yet if I must

go to the asylum I wanted to do it quietly, without sensational scare-heads, without the mortification of making the trip in handcuffs chained to some country constable. Flushed and panting, I sat down on a grassy knoll, taking care, however, to face the source of my flight.

Then I remembered.

"It's the Cobb ranch!" I exclaimed. "Why didn't I think of that before?"

My host had casually mentioned the place to me as I started out with my gun on my shoulder.

"Better not stray on to the Cobb ranch," he had remarked. "Somebody might take a shot at you if you do. It's a couple o' miles down the river and you'll know it by the fringe of sunflowers and the 'keep out' signs on the posts. That's one ranch everybody hereabouts has learned to fight shy of."

When I reached the home of my host I said nothing of the startling things I had seen that day — or thought I had seen — but after supper I unconcernedly questioned my host about the mysterious farm and its owner. I learned that the Cobbs, a middle-aged couple, had moved in from nobody knew where some seven years previously. They had bought the most isolated farm in that section of the county, a place of four hundred acres, but had been able to pay only a small fraction of the purchase price. Neighbors had freely predicted that the place would revert to the former owner, but, to their surprise, the entire debt had been settled in four years' time. The Cobbs had prospered wonderfully. They had purchased another one hundred acres of land adjoining their own and were now negotiating for another two hundred acres.

Since their advent, I learned, the Cobbs had never visited or willingly received a visitor. Persons who had, for one reason or another, wished to call on them, had found a padlock on the outside gate. On essaying to enter despite this, they had been summarily ordered away and told that they might entrust their business to a letter or arrange for a personal interview with the proprietor in the neighboring town. Even the county assessor was not allowed to enter that gate without having first apprised Cyrus Cobb by mail of the date of his coming.

The most enigmatical fact of all about the Cobbs, however, was their mysterious method of operating their place. It was admitted to be a physical impossibility for one man to work the farm alone, and yet in all the seven years of their residence the Cobbs had not been known to hire or discharge a farm-hand. If they employed any hands at all, nobody had ever had so much as a glimpse of them. Daily, Cyrus Cobb drove to a near-by skimming station with the milk of a score of cows. Several times a year he herded a band of hogs to market or sold a few hundred chickens. He raised hay, wheat and barley. Yet when people met him on the road or in town they noticed that he never looked worried or overworked. They wondered dully how he got his work done. Sometimes they speculated half humorously among themselves, but they never investigated. After their first friendly advances had been rebuffed they left Cyrus Cobb and his ranch severely alone. Evidently none of them had seen what I myself had seen that day, else the countryside would have rung with the story.

After catechising my landlord I decided that, after all, I had been afflicted with no illusion of the sight or aberration of the brain. I was convinced that I had run upon a mystery unparalleled in any of my excursions into either fact or fiction.

I had delved almost not at all in the realm of ghosts, apparitions and such, and took no stock in them. Only once, I remembered, some ten years previous, had I attended a spiritualistic seance, and that time, though all the other attendants at the affair had expressed a strong conviction of the genuineness of the phenomena, I had merely laughed within myself and said: "How easy! Give me a phonograph trumpet, a cabinet, a bed-sheet, an old guitar and some preparation that will make that lamp burst into flame when I turn up the wick, and I can duplicate the performance myself without a single rehearsal."

But in my newspaper account of the seance I had not said these things. I had told just what I had seen, what I had heard, and let the reader draw his own conclusions. That the reader had chosen to take my story as an evidence of the reality of spirit materialization was no fault of mine.

A bitter quarrel between rival mediums culminating in mutual accusations of trickery and public denunciations was what had

given rise to my little newspaper investigation. Hiram Canby, the medium whose flirtation with the denizens of another world I had written up, had looked upon my "story" as a complete vindication of himself. He had thanked me profusely for my "fairness" and had wished me all sorts of fine luck in the future, promising me the good offices of all the spectres at his command.

Canby was a tall, gaunt, hump-shouldered fellow, with the features of a Turk and a hairless face spotted like the sides of a leopard. He lacked eyebrows, his bald head was covered with a thick, curly black wig, and his large, dark eyes glowed from the depths of their cavernous sockets like a wolf's eyes shining from the bottom of his den. At the time I knew him, Canby's spook business was only a side line, the chief support for himself and wife being a small second-hand store which he dubbed "The Old Curiosity Shop." His favorite "control" was a shade known as Oklahoma Jones, famed in the little city for his quick knock-outs of over-inquisitive persons, for more than one rash young man had suffered a broken head while striking a match at a seance or otherwise trying to test for himself the reality of Canby's trumpet-whispering sprites.

Despite several hours of midnight pondering, I arose with my mind as far as ever from a solution of the Cobb ranch mystery. However, the night had brought me one conclusion — that I would make a desperate attempt to penetrate the puzzle and to run to earth the secret of the unseen hands.

The middle of the afternoon saw me, with my gun on my shoulder, threading the fields in the direction of the farm of Cyrus Cobb. The day was perfect, clear and warm, vibrant with the vital essences of spring. But to me the very tranquility of the afternoon seemed to hold a sinister meaning, the warm sunshine to be charged with menace. As I came in sight of the fringe of nodding sunflowers, the terror of things unaccountable built an iceberg around my heart.

To relieve my depression I started to whistle a lively tune, but the sound died on my lips. I could not whistle. Bolstering my courage with a sickly grin, I crossed the devil's lane and slipped stealthily through the jungle of sunflowers.

The same plow and team were at work as on the day previous.

The patch of unturned earth was almost gone now. Driverless still, the six horses were making the difficult turns in perfect order and with admirable dispatch.

A rod behind the plow followed a shepherd dog, walking lazily in the furrow, his head and tail down. Suddenly he pricked up his ears and the next moment was off across the freshly turned earth. The attraction, a cotton-tail rabbit, was quickly overhauled. Seizing him by the back, the dog shook him violently until he ceased to struggle. Wagging his tail as if in anticipation of the praise of a master, the dog bore his prize back to the plow, and — even now I could hardly believe my eyes — I saw the rabbit detach itself from the jaws of the dog and drop into the plow-box!

A few minutes later I watched the turning of the last furrow and the unhitching of the team. The horses simply halted, the state-chains dropped from the double-trees, then the team moved on toward the farm buildings in the distance.

I resolved to get closer to those farm buildings myself. They were a half mile distant. Immediately to their left I observed a straggling grove of trees. This was my chance.

Following the fence until the grove was between myself and the collection of buildings, I crept through a field of ripening grain to the shelter of the trees. Even here I took no chances, but glided from one trunk to another until I found myself close upon a corral.

The corral was full of cows, gathered, I rightly divined, for the evening milking. Of a sudden my shifting glance became fixed and my knees wobbled under me. Suspended in the air beneath the bulging udder of a bossy I saw an ordinary milk-pail, while tilted at a familiar angle on the ground beside her right hind leg was a milking-stool. Into the pail the white fluid was streaming in geyser-like jets. I watched the operation, fascinated. More and more meager became the squirts of milk. At last they ceased. I saw the pail withdrawn and the stool topple over. Picking its way among the cows, the pail floated through a little gate — which opened and shut for it — and, tipping, poured its contents into a large can which stood on a near-by table. The pail, swinging in buoyant emptiness, returned to the corral. It hesitated above the stool and the latter leaped up in the air beside it.

Pail and stool together then singled out a second cow and proceeded to milk her as they had milked her neighbor.

I stole along the border of the wood, but stopped with thundering pulses. In the shade of a tree a middle-aged woman reclined in an easy chair, peacefully finishing an afternoon nap. Here at last was flesh and blood, I thought. But, as I looked, a fan waved slowly backward and forward before the sleeping face!

Presently the woman awoke, rose and moved toward the house. Behind her followed chair and fan, floating through the air at her back.

Lurking at the edge of the wood, I watched the completion of the evening chores. A sack of wheat cleanings emerged from a granary, floated through the air to the chicken yard, where it tipped its ears downward and spilled its contents over the ground. Leaving the greedy fowls to cluck and cackle over their supper, the empty sack hung itself on a near-by fence. More sacks emerged from the granary door and were wafted to the hog lot, where they dumped themselves in troughs and over the backs of the struggling, squealing porkers. Joining the procession, a large can of skimmed milk also poured its contents into the troughs.

The corral gate swung open and the cows filed into the pasture. The hand pump creaked merrily and the troughs filled with water. The stable door opened, and horses, following their tugging halter ropes, went to water and back again. A hay-wagon came in from the field, the chains dropped from the double-trees, the neck-yoke thudded to the ground, and the team disappeared inside the barn. An ax swung lustily at the woodpile and armfuls of wood floated through the air and into the house.

As twilight laid its melancholy shroud upon the farm, I smelled the odor of cooking food and, with both barrels of my gun cocked and ready for I knew not what, I crept stealthily toward the house.

Through a garden gate I glided, along an arbor walk and up to the side of the silent walls. Beneath an open window I halted and, as I raised my eyes above the sash, I heard voices.

"Yes, I've promised the hands a night off," a masculine voice was saying, in a high-pitched, nasal drawl. "They've been beg-

ging for it for a long time, and, as they've been mighty faithful, I just thought I'd give it to them."

That voice! I had heard it before, sometime, somewhere. The hands! I'd just like to get a look at some of those hands.

I peeped through the window. The room was dark, but a light streamed through an open door on its opposite side. Evidently the speaker was in the farther room. I could see no one, but in a moment a dish floated across the open doorway. The Cobbs were at supper.

Shifting my position to another window, I found that I could command a better view of the second room. Seated at a table, in the act of transferring a forkful of food to his mouth, I beheld the figure of a man. The face was devoid of hair, thin, gaunt and aquiline. The lips were compressed, the eyebrows absent, the skull hidden by a profusion of curly black hair, strangely inconsistent with the rest of the make-up. As the man lifted his voice a second time all doubt was dispelled. Cyrus Cobb was my old acquaintance, Hiram Canby!

A noise at the gate caused me to turn hastily. Gliding along the arbor walk came a white shadow. Its size, shape and density I could not guess in that moment of awful horror. As I feebly fumbled at the triggers of my gun a huge club was brandished above my head. I tried to dodge, I tried to cry out, but the thing struck me a crushing blow and I felt myself drowning in a sea of inky blackness.

When I regained consciousness I was lying between the white sheets of a soft bed. It was day, and my first sensations were a throbbing of the head and a faintness at the stomach. I sat up, wonderingly, and as I did so I heard a door open at my back.

"Pulling yourself together, eh?" drawled a high-pitched, nasal voice. "I thought 'twas about time."

Turning my head, I looked into the deep-set eyes of Hiram Canby. He was holding out a hand.

"Spying on me, eh?" he continued, pleasantly, as I took the bony member. "I s'pose now you'll be writing me up in the papers."

I grinned sheepishly.

"Well, I won't mind it, now the scheme's proved a success,"

he said, easily, drawing up a chair and motioning me to stay where I was; "but, young fellow, if you hadn't done me a good turn once it 'ud been all off with you last night. Okey was just about to finish you when he recognized your face and called me out."

"Okey?" I interrogated, with a puzzled frown, raising a hand to my bruised head.

"Oklahoma Jones, my foreman — you remember him back in Harney," reminded Canby.

"Sure I remember him," I jerked out, "but your foreman — I don't understand. You don't mean to tell me that you're working this ranch with the shades of the departed?"

"You've hit it," cackled Canby, gleefully slapping a lanky knee, "though I wouldn't have told you if I hadn't thought you'd already guessed it. This is the original ghost ranch, the first and only farm of the unseen hands. When it comes to turning out profits on the investment, flesh and blood at thirty dollars a month isn't in it for a minute, while improved machinery is skinned a thousand miles. Nothing for wages; nothing for clothes; nothing for grub; nothing for ——"

"But how did you do it?" I broke in, breathlessly. In heaven's name how did you ever come to do it?"

"I was just telling you," explained Canby. "I was just going to say that I reasoned it all out back there in Harney eight or nine years ago. If a man can make spirits rap on the walls, pack messages back and forth, tip tables and otherwise juggle with the furniture, as well as trounce disturbers of a seance, what's the matter with having them perform labor of a useful sort? What's the good of letting all that energy go to waste? What's the matter with making them use their muscles on our bread and butter problem? That's the way I figured it out. Logical? Of course it is. Anybody can see it, but somehow nobody else had thought of the scheme. Well, sir, the minute the idea hit me between the eyes I began rounding up a bunch of able-bodied spirits. I told myself that it was the one way for us mediums to prove beyond any doubt that the spirit calling business is no fake. Then I hunted for a ranch where I wouldn't be bothered with meddlers. I'd rather have tried the experiment in a factory,

because I'm something of a mechanical genius myself, but I was afraid of being put in an asylum or stoned by a mob. People are still frightfully superstitious, you know."

"And the plan worked?" I gasped.

"You bet it worked," beamed Canby. "I tell you there's nothing like it. It's like getting money from home. It's like taking candy from a baby. It's like hiking back to the garden of Eden. And the beauty of it is that you can apply it to any industry. I predict that in five years my system of ghost labor will have revolutionized the world. The mines, the shops, the factories, the railroads and the stores will all be operated by spirits for the benefit of men. We'll have ghost engineers and firemen, ghost ticket punchers, ghost chauffeurs for our automobiles and ghost laborers to build the smoothest boulevards you ever dreamed of. We'll have ghost laundrymen and scrubwomen, ghost cooks and waiters; we'll even have ghost nursemaids to wheel our baby carriages for us. We'll have ghost clerks in the stores, and mighty attentive they will be, too, and ghost brick-layers and builders, and there won't be any labor unions to object, because toil for men will have been abolished and every last jack of us will be a bloated aristocrat. Yes, I alone can call enough spirits from the other sphere to do the work of the world."

"But, Mr. Canby," I objected, "aren't the ghosts themselves likely to organize a union and go on strike?"

"Not at all. There's nothing they like better than work."

"But are your ghost workmen always satisfied?" I probed, remembering Canby's words to his wife as I listened at the window. "Don't they ever ask any favors?"

"Well," confessed Canby, "there's one thing that has given me a little annoyance. They do love an old-fashioned ha'nt, and they've been pestering me to let them take one. In the past I've not allowed them to go off the place, and they've had to be content to do their dances around the rabbit holes in the pasture. But now I've promised them a night off for a good old ha'nt of Jim Simpkins, who's been letting his hogs run on my barley. Jim Simpkins will be scared some — Ha! ha! Just wait a couple o' days. That ghost dance will be the talk of the country."

"But isn't that ha'nting mania itself likely to interfere with

the general application of your system? Won't the people be prejudiced against spirits with such tastes and refuse to have anything to do with them?"

"The people will become educated," replied Canby. "As soon as they get over their superstitious terror of the departed brothers they won't mind the ha'nts one bit, and as soon as they don't mind, then the spirits won't care to indulge, as the fun with them all comes in scaring the other fellow. Oh, you can't find any flaw in the scheme, young man. It's going to save society, and don't you forget it. Don't you forget, either, that the honor and glory will belong to Hiram Canby, who buried his genius for thirty years within the four walls of an Old Curiosity Shop."

The Art of Vengeance.*

BY FREDERICK FERDINAND MOORE.

MATIAS could see the soldiers building the gallows. He, Matias Bunagan, heretofore an honest rice cutter of El Poro and a peaceable subject of the great American President of the Philippines, and willing to pay his taxes to the crown of the United States, must be hanged.

Matias understood everything fully. He had killed Pascual de la Cruz. It was the result of an old family feud, which had started long before the Americans had come to the Philippines. In fact, the feud was so old that Matias could not remember what it was about, except that the Bunagan family had sworn by the Blessed Virgin to kill all the members of the de la Cruz family in the province of Cavité, and that was all he cared to know.

The Americans could not understand it. He had been right in killing Pascual; it was as much his duty to kill Pascual as to pay his land tax and cut rice. But the Americans were going to hang Matias to-morrow, and through the walls of his *nipa* prison, he could see the soldiers driving the nails and cutting the beams.

He squatted on the ground and smoked and listened to the music of the hammer. The children were playing in the plaza, and he could hear the chatter of the women in the market and the hum of the Chinese tailor's sewing machine in the *barrio*. The leaves of the palm trees were swinging in the breeze like the arms of so many windmills — swaying as Matias would sway in the breeze to-morrow afternoon, with the black cap over his head and the Manila rope around his neck, and his legs and arms bound fast. He had seen Filipinos hanged himself. The natives came from miles around to see an execution, and he knew how it would be with him.

He could see the priest walking with him from the prison, and

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the sea of curious faces all about — women with naked babies at their breasts, and frightened little girls saying their rosaries, and the file of soldiers keeping back the crowd. He saw himself going up the dozen steps which the soldiers were fitting, heard the prayer of the priest on the platform, saw the hangman tie the knot, caught a glimpse of the black box on the ground below — the black cap jammed over his eyes — the click of the trap and then the plunge into space at the end of the rope — *Madre de Dios!*

Matias brushed away the cold drops which formed on his forehead as he pictured his death the next day. It was terrible, but it could not be helped. He had killed Pascual, and his friends and neighbors would want to see him die bravely, so he resolved to climb the gallows with a cigarette in his mouth and a sneer on his lips for the Americans who hanged a man for killing when he had sworn to do it in a blood feud.

He sat and smoked through the afternoon and reviewed his life. He saw the sun go down behind the mountains of Manila Bay, and knew he would never see that sunset again. Well, he had killed Pascual, and there was some satisfaction in that.

Since his trial, Juan de la Cruz, the brother of Pascual, had come from Manila. He hated Juan and Juan hated him. He knew Juan would be there at noon to-morrow to see him mount the gallows and die, and the knowledge added much bitterness to his position.

"That dog of a dog will stand near the gallows," thought Matias, "and laugh in my face as I go by, with irons on my hands and legs. If I can, I will spit in his eye," and much comforted by the plan, he rolled another cigarette and stolidly watched the soldiers test the new rope by dropping a sack of grain from the beam, with the sack at the end where Matias would be at noon to-morrow.

They brought him boiled rice, and at dark put the death watch over him. The sentry paced outside the guard house, and Matias could see him through the basket-like wall of the prison.

Sleep? No, he would not sleep, for there were but a few hours of life left to him, and he would smoke through the night. Pray? Why should he pray? He had sworn to kill Pascual, and God would not blame him for killing, no matter what the padre or the Americans said. He would die without sleeping or praying,

and he would show the people of El Poro how a Bunagan could die.

It was very dark now, and all he could see was the tip of his cigarette when it flared up as he puffed it. He could hear the sentry pacing outside, and after a while he heard a bugle blowing, and the wind swishing through the palm trees, but he was going to die at noon to-morrow and did not care what happened.

What was that? Did he hear something rustle outside the bamboo wall? It was a strange noise, and the sentry heard it, for he stopped his pacing for a minute. It must have been a snake or a tree toad.

The sentry resumed his monotonous walk and Matias puffed his cigarette.

There it was again! It was almost at his feet and just outside the split bamboo wall. It was a boring sound, and it came when the sentry was at the farther end of his beat. He put his hand on the wall and felt it tremble. What could it be?

It stopped as the sentry came past again. Then the stealthy sound began again when the sentry was at the other end of the guard house.

"Matias," came a gentle whisper.

"Yes," hissed Matias, quivering with excitement.

"Here is a bolo — meet me at the dead palm tree in the barrio — be careful — you have a long time to cut out — I will be waiting."

By all the Holy Saints! Who could it be that was bringing the much desired bolo? Who was bringing him sweet life? With a sharp bolo he could cut his way to freedom easily.

Matias felt along the wall cautiously and his hand encountered the hilt of a great bolo, thrust through a hole in the wall. Inch by inch he drew it inward, and the blade cut its way through the bamboo strips noiselessly.

Sometimes he took ten minutes to cut through a strip of bamboo the size of his finger. When a dog barked he gained a couple of inches — when "Taps" sounded he cut a slit a foot long in the wall. In an hour his little door was complete, and when the sentry went around the guard house he crawled through and slipped away in the darkness.

Queen of Angels! It was good to be free again. And here he was, under the very gallows which had been built for him. He stopped to curse the timbers and the Americans, spat on the steps, and then stole through the palm grove to meet his unknown friend at the dead palm.

"Is that you, Matias?"

"Yes. Who is my saviour? Forever I am your slave."

"Come," said the unknown, "Follow me. They will miss you in a few minutes when the watch is changed, and you must hide."

Matias followed on in the darkness, afraid that it was all a dream and that he would wake up to hear the guard calling him to make ready for death.

On through the jungle they went, toward the hills, and Matias knew his rescuer was taking him to a cave somewhere in the great cañon, where he could hide until an opportunity presented itself to escape to Manila.

Soon he heard the sound of dripping water and he was guided into a small cave, and he could feel the damp and slimy walls of rock.

"Now," said the stranger, "Give me the bolo, for I must go back through the jungle and I need a weapon. Lie here until I come in the morning with food. Don't stir outside or make a noise, for the soldiers will be seeking for you everywhere, and if I am long in coming do not fear, for we must be cautious. Good bye."

"Who are you?" asked Matias.

"You must not know until you are safe — I am a good friend — fear not."

"May God bless you," said Matias, and he kissed the hand of the stranger. "Ten thousand blessings on your head and I am your slave for life."

The unknown glided away, and Matias heard him roll a stone in the entrance of the cave and then all was still, except the incessant dripping of the water. It was better than the guard house, he thought, with the sentry pacing outside and the dreadful gallows with the rope swinging from the beam, in the prison yard. He rolled a cigarette and smoked, and sat on his heels.

All night he stared into the blackness, burning his hand at

times with the fire of his cigarette when he found himself wondering if it were a dream. Finally, the light filtered through the crevices, and then a tiny sunbeam crept in through the entrance of the cave, but he did not move from the place where he had sat all night.

After a long time he heard some one at the stone and a form came in, and after his eyes had become accustomed to the light he saw a well-dressed native standing over him with a bolo.

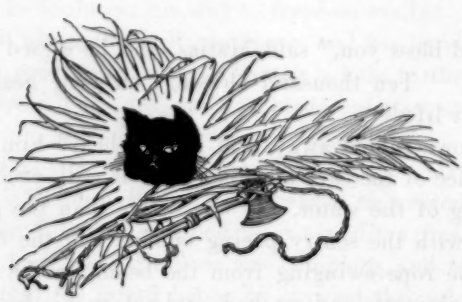
"Juan de la Cruz!" he cried, drawing back in terror.

"Yes — Juan de la Cruz. The brother of Pascual, whom you killed. It was I who helped you to escape last night."

"The feud!" groaned Matias, "You have come to kill me! You dog, you took me from prison to bolo me here. Why did you not let them hang me? I would rather be hanged a thousand times by the hated Americans than to die by your hand."

"I have not come to kill you," said the other. "That was my plan last night, for a de la Cruz must have his vengeance. But the American colonel has offered five hundred *pesos* for your capture. Five hundred *pesos* will buy many masses for the soul of my brother. The Americans will hang you, and I will have no blood on my hands. Come — the hangman is waiting."

He led Matias back to the village. The soldiers put the irons on his hands and he saw the blood money paid to Juan. He saw the rope swinging in the breeze. The priest prayed. He stepped on the trap and swung into eternity.



The Goddess of the Sea.*

BY ROSE MILLS POWERS.

BRINE-ENCRUSTED old ruin as she was, the Goddess of the Sea retained a certain dignity that her abandonment by priest and worshipper alike could not destroy. There was something commanding about the outlines of the old temple that made it believable that she had served as fortress as well as shrine. Loopholes in her porcelain façade and her battlemented walls attested to the popular tradition that she had been one of the city's outlying strongholds in the days of cross-bow warfare.

In faded scarlet and tarnished gilt, the life size, clay image of the goddess looked placidly from her shrine in the central hall, her attendant divinities, Favorable Wind Ear and Thousand Mile Eye, beloved of sailors and junk men, leaning toward her in worshipful postures.

Since the days of her royal patroness, one of the early empresses of the Ming era, the goddess had gazed, faintly smiling, on many changing scenes in her lacquered halls. The magnificence of satin-clad emperors had trailed itself before her eyes; the cotton-clad simplicity of sea-faring folk had prostrated itself at her feet, — there had been bloody warfare at her very doors and the shrieks of the wounded and dying had echoed through her corridors — but surely unique was the scene upon which she now looked — a tow-headed American lad clambering into her sacred lap and poking behind her honorable back with a long stick. From the stone step at the feet of the goddess, sacred to incense and joss-stick burning since time immemorial, a little girl, pink-cheeked and tearful, raised a despairing face to the young vandal.

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"No use, Constance," the boy announced after several vigorous thrusts, "Your doll is not here. Whew! what a dust! Let's get out into the courtyard and you can tell me over again how you came to lose her."

The Temple courtyard, shady with fragrant plum and oleander, and swept by sea breezes, was the favorite rallying spot for excursions with the little foreign community in the gray old Chinese city. As the children entered the square, a flock of pigeons feasting on stray remnants from a recent picnic arose with a sweep into the air and vanished in the red eaves of the building.

Between her sobs, Constance restated the events that had led up to the loss of her doll: With the other children of the picnic party, she had been playing hide and seek and had climbed to hide behind the idol. Tiffin had been called just then and she laid her doll for safe keeping in the wide comfortable looking lap of the goddess, intending to return for her after the meal, but had forgotten all about her until some hours later. The narrative ended with a storm of sobs, the boy trying in a clumsy way to quiet his sister, but to no avail. Suddenly Constance looked up with brightening eyes.

"Oh, David, I forgot; old Wu was looking in at the door when I climbed down from the idol, perhaps he knows something about my doll."

"Who do you mean?" asked the boy.

"Why, you know, old Wu who lives in the little house at the Temple gate and makes the paper toys and mock money to be burned at the graves."

David's eyes opened wide. Here was a clue.

"We'll go and ask him," he said, jumping to his feet. "Cheer up, we'll find Lady Laura yet."

They descended the long flight of steps to the gate to find the little outbuilding occupied by Wu shut up and bolted.

"He's probably gone to carry a load of his things to some funeral," said Constance. "He had a lot of paper animals and clothes stacked up outside the door when we came this morning."

David was staring past the sorghum fields toward the west, where the city wall ran its castellated outline against the horizon. A faint wailing accompanied by the clang of cymbals rose on the

air, and the gleam of embroidered trappings threw into relief a long line of white-robed figures. A funeral was in progress in one of the ancestral burying grounds adjoining the city wall. The children, moved by a common impulse, ran toward the scene.

Wu, the image and offering-maker of Sin Chow, was something of an artist in his line. When failing strength made him quit his profession of following the mast, he had taken up this trade and had been so successful that he was known as "Wu of the inspired thumb." No one could equal his deftness of touch in making the various offerings wrought of clay, bamboo and paper burned by mourning relatives at the graves of deceased friends. There was also a touch of sentiment about the old sailor, as his occupation of the hovel near the temple proved, and it was rumored that he daily worshipped at the shrine of the abandoned Goddess of the Sea.

When Li Fan Yin, who was one of the minor mandarins and a person of some official importance in Sin Chow, had come to him with a large order for funeral offerings for his deceased wife, among other things asked for (be it confessed, somewhat shamefacedly by that worthy gentleman), had been a representation of a "foreign devil." Mrs. Li had become acquainted with one of the woman missionaries and during her last illness had taken a strange fancy to having this foreign person visit her — abnormal, no doubt, the graduate explained, tapping his head significantly — but as it was her last illness, he had agreed to the odd whim she had expressed, to have an image of the foreigner in the retinue accompanying her to the spirit world. Could Wu undertake such a commission?

Wu, with much servile prostrating, owing to the somewhat exalted rank of his customer, assured him of his ability to execute any order his honorable highness might be pleased to ask of his worthless servant, and the bargain was concluded.

The image-maker spent several days working at Li's order and, on the day of the funeral, it was with great satisfaction that he unloaded his stock of offerings at the grave of Mrs. Li. There was a glint of excitement in his eye that betokened something out of the ordinary in what he had to show.

The ceremony of the burial had proceeded to the point where

the local divinities were being placated by offerings of meat, wine and mock money. Now the wailings of the mourners were redoubled as the little sedan chair, with the picture of Mrs. Li inside, was brought forward from Wu's pack. Around it were grouped representations of animals, mock jewelry and bunches of gilt and silver paper money. Then the officiating priest, with an explanatory remark about the curious whim of the late Mrs. Li, held up the image of the "foreign devil" lady who was to go as an attendant to the deceased. The crowd pressed nearer to gaze at this offering and a "Hi yah" of admiration smote the ears of Wu where he stood, outwardly nonchalant but inwardly exultant as he noticed Li Fan Yin's satisfaction in the amount of "face" he was creating in the burial of Mrs. Li. "That means three, perhaps five, extra strings of cash," the offering-maker calculated to himself.

As the priest held Wu's masterpiece upraised, a cry arose on the outskirts of the crowd and it parted as two breathless foreign children forced their way past the mourners into the circle around the open grave.

"Oh, my dolly! Give me my dolly!" cried Constance, as she saw her beloved Lady Laura in the priest's hands. Then, noticing the fire of smoldering charcoal which was waiting for the offerings, and realizing what was about to happen, she began shrieking hysterically with hands outstretched to her lost treasure.

David, with cooler head, began to offer an explanation to the company, which, till now, had stood still from sheer astonishment at the turn affairs had taken.

The faultless Chinese of his eloquent appeal for justice, and his denunciation of the thieving Wu, who slunk in the background as attention was drawn to him, won some sympathy for the children, but Li Fan Yin's brow contracted as he saw the effect of David's tale and, fearing he might "lose face" if the doll were given up, he hurriedly seized the boy by the arm and started to eject him from the place. As David resisted, the sudden rage which sometimes possesses the Chinaman came upon Li, and, forgetting the dignity of his position in the anger that consumed him, he began to shriek a tirade of verbal abuse at the American lad.

Shaking himself free from the half-crazed Chinaman, David faced him with flashing eyes. Not for naught came he from a line of ancestors of the Church and State militant. The blood of fearless Pilgrims and staunch minute men ran in his veins, and he was ready to fight to the death for his principles. Lad as he was, he had not lived in China fourteen years in vain, and his subconscious self, which had been absorbing impressions through all his young life, came to his rescue. In his comings and goings, many a forensic contest had he witnessed, many a wordy duel in market place and country road, and, without the slightest effort, he found himself giving the irate official a roland for every oliver, with this difference, that, whereas Li had descended to street lingo, the retort courteous as given by David was couched in classic Confucian diction.

The Chinaman, beaten at his own game, and red in the face and breathless from his verbal onslaught, was soon glad to snatch the doll from the priest's hand and restore it to its rightful owner. Immediately, as if nothing had happened, the funeral ceremonies were renewed, and the persistent wail of the mourners again rent the air. The incident was closed.

As the children dodged around the tombs to reach the open fields adjoining the mission compound, they saw Wu disappearing in the direction of the temple — a slinking, dejected figure outlined against the red sunset sky.

The next picnic party found an empty room at the temple gate. Wu lodged there no more. They also found the Goddess of the Sea decapitated, her head with faintly smiling lips lying on her folded hands. The foreigners were puzzled by this act of vandalism, but no Chinamen to whom they appealed could explain it and their apathetic shrugs showed the slight impression made upon them by the occurrence.

But an offering-maker who earns an indifferent living in an interior city, some hundred miles away, sometimes scowls over his work as he mutters to himself:

"Did I not carry daily offerings to her shrine? Did I not make three kneelings and nine knockings at her feet, night and morning? Did she not herself give me what my hands could not fashion, causing the little foreign devil to leave it in her lap

for me to take? Ah, base and ungrateful goddess, to so trick me in the end, causing me to forever lose face in Sin Chow! But these hands, Hi Yah! they wrought a rapid vengeance!"

And, as the recreant Wu looks reminiscently at his skinny, long nailed fingers — far away the decapitated Goddess of the Sea, in her forsaken shrine, faintly smiles.

The White Handkerchief.*

BY JAMES FRANCIS DWYER.

T hung between a portrait of Kruger and a rough pencil drawing of a skirmish at Paardeburg. Deschard stared at it, and wondered. A square of linen, slightly soiled, was to him an unusual wall decoration. Yet, something must have made it precious. Perhaps it had done duty as a flag of truce; perhaps, in those fierce days when each side forgot the laws of warfare, it had lured an unsuspecting foeman to his death.

The Vrouw with the deep-set brown eyes, watched the visitor as he drank the cool well water. Presently she spoke:

"You are wondering about that," she said, pointing to the frame containing the piece of linen. "We call it 'Piet's Handkerchief.'"

Deschard blushed. "I was wondering," he stammered. "Yes — I was."

The woman with the wrinkled face laughed softly.

"You have heard of him, Piet Van Reick?" she questioned. "Ah, I thought you would have heard. I am his mother."

Over her face there came a sweet look of conscious pride that softened and beautified it. Deschard bowed, and mentally recorded the fact that there is no soulfilling pride like that felt by the woman who has mothered a hero.

"You know of his work," she cried. "Ah, we will never forget! While the veldt spreads pure and wholesome under the eye of God we will remember. Why shouldn't we? Souls grow big that live on memories.

"See the little kopje to the right? Nine men lie buried there. A score of them, out hunting Cronje, rode down here one summer afternoon. Three hours afterwards, when the live eleven with

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their cursing officer rushed the house, they found me alone. They had sense enough to know that I couldn't bring a man down at eight hundred yards. Piet had crept past the angry fools, and he was riding fast to Swartz Nek while they were questioning his mother. *Gott im Hemel!* I mothered a man!"

Deschard's nerves tingled as he contemplated the narrator.

"It is too long to tell it all," she continued. "Perhaps you know much of it, and the story would be old news. The Lieutenant Hollingworth business? Ah, you know! My Piet! My Piet! Fifteen men, and he sent them back naked to their commander! Sent them back as bare as the Red Plain when the water dries at Schneider's Ford. Will those fifteen ever forget, think you?"

She rose from her chair and stood upright. Memory lit a fire within her soul that made the old eyes blaze.

"He was a brother to De Wet. He sat with Cronje, my Piet! They spoke of him at Capetown, and ten thousand women prayed the good God to spare him to our side. Could a mother ask for more?

"Then that last — you know of that, too? Who doesn't? Our children sing of it. The winds, rolling softly over the sweet veldt, tell of it. Oh, yes, it was against the rules of war. The rules of war! The fools! There are no rules of war when one's women folk and children crouch in dread when the Mauser bullet sings a deathsong! There are no rules of war when the women kneel near the burning farms so that God can see as well as hear them! Men — men like my Piet — smash all rules at times like those. Has the tiger any rules when the lion springs upon the home of his cubs?

"They shot him at dawn with the sun peeping up over the veldt. I do not cry. I am proud. There are women who put his name in their prayers before the names of their dead husbands. Why should I weep?

"The little captain, a jackanapes in khaki, handed him that — that handkerchief.

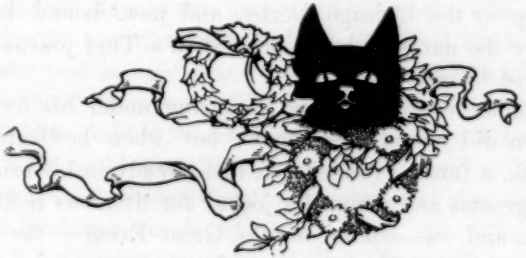
"'Bind your eyes,' he said.

"He said that to Piet. To my Piet! The little fool! Piet took the cloth and flung it in the captain's face.

"'I can look six men in the face, you coward,' he cried. 'Bind your own red eyes, lest it will be too much for your little heart to see a man die.'

"And Piet laughed, and while he laughed they shot him. My Piet. Yes, I mothered a man."

She sat back in the wooden chair, and after a time Deschard rose. He put out his hand to say good-bye, but she didn't notice it. The deep-set eyes were studying the tablets of Memory where Love had written the deeds of a hero.



Shenagolden's Magic.*

BY FLORENCE SEYLER THOMPSON.

ROM the West to the Sea, following the running races, had come Shenagolden, sometime of Kilmallock, on a pilgrimage of hate, and, as the miles grew less between him and Rodney Hughes, he felt physical satisfaction in letting his rage riot uncurbed in his heart. For many years, for many reasons, his anger had burned low, perforce, lest he himself be consumed. Out of work and discredited, because of the lie that had nearly broken his heart, he was kept from being a murderer only because his enemy had gone where he had no money to pursue. When the water no longer separated him from Hughes, it was months before he located his old employer, the trail leading to the Golden Gate, back to Memphis, down to New Orleans, up to the Chicago Derby, and now, bound Eastward, beckoned by the name he hated printed in a Turf journal, his revenge seemed in sight.

That Hughes was not racing his string under his own name, Shenagolden did not at first know, but when he learned that Black Death, a famous runner that had already in his brief career killed two grooms and maimed a jockey for life, was really owned by Hughes, and was entered for the Great Event — the Six-Furlongs Sweepstakes at Sheepshead — his mind was made up. Now the iron monster ahead of him was biting off the miles that still separated him from his vengeance, and as he leaned back in the car seat and closed his eyes to ease the tension of his brain, he felt a certain pride in his tenacity of purpose. He had known that he could hate hard, but not that he could hate so hard and so long.

Even before he had crossed from Kilmallock to England, to

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work among the horses he loved, young Terence had sometimes been seen by his intimates to grow suddenly white and pinched around the nostrils, while his eyes narrowed to slits in his excessive anger, but who could stand long in mortal terror of a boy with one brown, burning eye, when the other eye was Irish blue? Terence Shenagolden fancied his peculiarity the brand of Cain, but others who loved more than feared would not have had his two eyes alike — he would not have been Terence.

Could he help it that his heart so softened at the sight of a pretty face, when some gray-orbed, black-lashed colleen shot the splendid glory of her eyes full upon him, that a slow and reluctant smile stole over his lips, and a sweet, low whistle, that never came straight, issued from one corner of his mouth? One did not dislike Shenagolden for these things, but came nearest to it when running athwart his will — for he would have his own way — he loved authority, and dominion came to be as the breath of his nostrils.

One very wonderful gift he had, by which he had become known in every stable in England, and the notoriety had followed him to America. It was this magic of his, indeed, when exercised in public for the first time, that had brought about the breach with Hughes, who had accused him of drugging the horse upon which he had exercised his power. The animal had lain in stupor for a while, Hughes and his friends lost their money, and Terence was disgraced. He could have borne it all, and begged to be kept on in the most menial service, had not Hughes told that lie, and declared that the horse was doped!

Now he knew just what he would do. He would face Hughes, a pistol in his pocket, even on the race track, and shoot him straight between the eyes. And after that? He did not care. That had always been the climax of his dreams. He knew just what he would say, even though his voice reverted to the old familiar brogue and lost, in its rage, the mellow richness of a silver bell, from vocal chords strung like the harp of Tara.

With a purpose so grim, he was naturally not anxious to foregather with the grooms and idlers about the stables nor the touts about the track, and so it was with swift dismay that he saw, almost as soon as he was within the big gates, a jockey whom he

had known, and who, in fact, had been present on that humiliating occasion so long ago in England. "Slim Jim" Lind recognized him at once, but gave no hint of remembrance of that which Terence cherished the more the fiercer it hurt.

Lind, he knew, must be riding for Hughes, and he kept his ears open for all the gossip of the track, and it was with strange emotions that he drank in the significantly whispered words:

"Hughes is playing for more than the big stake this time — it's for life itself," said one. . . . "What yer givin' us?" snorted another, "yer know he's barred from the turf!" . . . "That doesn't prevent his putting his string in another name, smarty! He's had a horse in every race of any account since that crooked deal of his at New Orleans!"

"He's gone to pieces along with Black Death," the first man resumed. "It's nothing but the horse's bad temper that ails him, and it's his black soul that ails Hughes. He's on his last legs, and nobody but one specialist over in Europe can save him. His whole string's sold now, but the black, that's entered for the big purse this afternoon — and you can't trust that horse more'n you could the devil!"

"Surest thing you know," assented the other. "Why, I remember one time, when Death had lost a race, Hughes shook his fist under his nose, and foamin' at the mouth, yelled, 'And I paid $22,000 to pick that live coal out of hell!'"

The knowing one nodded, and continued: "The horse is entered in the name of his new wife, who doesn't know the first thing about the turf. She's dead stuck on Hughes, though nobody else, who's on to him, will trust or help him. 'Slim Jim's' straight, and will never throw a race — but the black may throw him! It's a good thing for Hughes' weak heart that he's not here to see the finish!"

Shenagolden turned away, furies raging in his heart. Thwarted again, when every nerve tingled with the longing to kill!

It was a long time before his violent anger was succeeded by a calm hardly less demoniac, for he caught a glimpse of the once famous and still magnificent racer, Black Death, and a sure instinct whispered that the black beast had in his eye a look that boded ill, and that the great race was lost before it was yet run.

Hughes had made his reputation and vanity suffer! Now, his own life was at stake, and forfeited!

Shenagolden was aroused from his reverie by the surging of the monster crowd, that spread along down the track, behind the fence, spilling over the grand stand — the occupants of carriages and touring cars adding a riot of color and noise to the animated scene. Again he saw the little one-hundred-and-five-pound jockey, Lind, flirting his whip in recognition to some one in the grand stand, and, following his glance, Shenagolden beheld a girlish looking figure and an eager but worried face. A second look took in the added details of a black gown and a small black toque trimmed with gold-colored satin, over which trailed a bright green feather.

A sudden lull in the laughter and the hubbub, a tremulous quiver of excitement, and then a perfect babel of sound announced that the starters in the first race were off. Shenagolden picked his winner in one of the tail-enders, for he himself had always been fond of getting away slowly. Ah, but that was a terrific burst of speed! His choice was still behind at the half, neck and neck at the stretch — now for a spurt! He felt the blood beating in his neck! There! The despised tail-ender went to the leaders with a rush, rounded the far turn and drew away into an easy lead in the last furlong!

This was life indeed to the former jockey! Through three or more events he sat, every nerve tense and tingling. Then he strolled over to the paddock. The next but one on the card was the Great Event of the day, and a nervous thrill pervaded the vast throng. The bookies and the talent had their hands full. Tremendous odds were offered and taken, for Black Death's unreliability was known to all. Shenagolden listened to the betting and the gossip with a fierce joy, and then he caught his breath as he came in sight of the famous runner himself, with Lind, his mount, in conference with the lady of the green feather. Her face was pale, and her hands were clasped and her eyes fixed upon the horse.

"Surely not," he muttered to himself. "She cannot be the wife of Hughes — and yet — !"

The three gazed at the black horse, whose hue was not a gleaming, glossy black, but a bluish duskiness, wonderful to behold.

His nostrils seemed to glow, either with hot blood or devil's fire. Shenagolden stole another look at the anxious face under the green feather. His hot anger, nursed through long years of waiting for vengeance still burned as he gazed again at the danger signal flaunting in the whites of the big horse's eyes.

Then the inevitable happened. Just as the horses came under the wire in the race before his own, Black Death began a dance, led by the furies raging within him, and all but threw and trampled the stable boy who held his head. Shenagolden could not have explained his complex emotions, as he watched the maddened horse struggling with his trainer, grooms and jockey. He knew that all hope of getting Black Death on to the track was futile — all hope of his winning the big purse gone!

"And I" — he crooned to himself, "I, Shenagolden of Kilmallock, can tame this blue devil! I can give that race to Rodney Hughes — to the black cur who shamed me before all England, on Derby Day!"

Suddenly Jim Lind, catching his gaze, sprang from the knot of perspiring men about the frantic brute, clutched Shenagolden by the arm, and, panting and breathless, exclaimed to the lady:

"Here he is, Eunice! . . . Terence, this is my sister — Hughes' wife! For God's sake help! It's life or death for him!"

Eunice clasped her hands again, convulsively — involuntarily. She tried to speak with dignity, but, torn with emotion, her voice broke as she said:

"They tell me you are a horse-whisperer — that you can do anything with a horse that you want to. Oh, Terence —" She burst into a half sob, and Shenagolden started at the dear old Irish name upon her lips.

"He — Rodney, my husband — calls you that! Have you any other name?" She faltered and crimsoned even in her hurried anguish. "He has said — Oh, often of late — 'That boy Terence could manage Black Death!' He did you wrong one time, I know; he has told me — but there was a reason — it was some money he had bet — Oh, I am ashamed to speak of it!"

Between her excited utterances she caught at her heart.

"But he is so ill now! I *must* win this race for him! Rodney admits — I don't understand, exactly — that you only used your

power too strongly! Oh, use it once again — for my sake! It seems as if the angels had listened to my prayer!"

She looked at him wistfully, and Lind stood stoically by.

Almost with her first words there had come to Shenagolden a sudden widening of the eyes, as if a curtain had been lifted — and a burden seemed rolled away from his heart.

"I came to kill your husband," he said simply, and in the same moment was turning toward the horse, when a gong sounded and through a megaphone a hoarse voice announced that the Six-Furlong race would be called in just five minutes! Black Death was still in a violent rage!

Like an electrical current, the news of something extraordinary about to happen ran through the crowd, and as the trio approached the horse those nearest had already divined it. "The horse-whisperer — magic worker — fake!" The words were tossed back and forth like rattling dice, and as Shenagolden's sensitive ears caught the last dread word once more his face grew hot.

But his time had come — not in the way he had dreamed and planned — but in a triumph that should be even sweeter! The years rolled back like a scroll and the arrogance of his hot youth came back, and with it the brogue to his tongue. Every bit of boyish vanity leaped to the surface again, and his nerves tingled in ecstasy in that spectacular moment when the eyes of a staring, fascinated multitude were upon him.

A hurried conference between judges and starter had been held. Yes — it was permissible — such things were sometimes done — on the other side. No official notice was taken of Black Death's condition or the sensational remedy proposed, but the raucous voice through the megaphone announced once more the time for the Great Event. Three minutes remained! Black Death would not be scratched or disqualified, but if not lined up among the starters at the send-off, he would simply be left at the post!

Two minutes! Five thousand pairs of eyes had but one objective point — the lithe and nonchalant back of Shenagolden, as he made his way toward the struggling and infuriated horse. The stable-men were exhausted and in mortal terror.

"I cannot fail — I must not —" prayed Shenagolden. If only an excess of power might not undo him again.

A dead stillness had fallen, and of the vast audience those near enough heard the velvety voice of the horse-whisperer. He was saying something unintelligible, but soft and musical, as he approached the angry beast. Not once did his pace slacken, but straight up, unfalteringly, did he come, and at the first lyric note the animal's quivering ceased, and Black Death stood still.

Shenagolden touched him lightly on the neck, whispered again, and the great horse neighed and lay down. For a moment only, a deadly fear gripped Terence, but it passed as quickly, and then, to the accompaniment of a colossal gasp of horror, he had stretched himself full length upon the panting body of that passive volcano, and impudently, but superbly, lighted a cigarette!

Ten seconds later he had risen, and without a word or glance had strolled away, — and Black Death had followed him to the starting post, as if he were his dog!

The crowd went mad for a moment, in a riot of mingled joy and rage, and as Lind leaped lightly to his seat in the saddle men literally threw money at the bookmakers in their frantic haste to bet, and the insanity of that minute and some brief seconds in which Black Death, a bluish streak of leaping flesh, topped with a blur of green and gold, the colors of the old Hughes stables, won the Six Furlongs in record time, was the most intense ever known in the history of the great classic Event of the East.

The fact that Shenagolden's pilgrimage of hate came to such a peculiar end is perhaps accounted for by that other fact that Terence had one eye that was blue, though the other was brown.

While the big purse of thirty-five thousand dollars added a few months to the life of Rodney Hughes, and gave him a chance to retract his words about the drugging of his horse, which he did right handsomely, too, before he died, the European specialist could only tide him over the winter. And now it seems that sometime the velvet voice of Shenagolden of Kilmallock, with its strings like the harp of Tara, will whisper away the heart of Black Death's mistress.

Miss Betty.*

BY JUDITH GRAVES WALDO.

HEN Jedediah was a baby, Lucia, his mother, used to wrap him away in the dried sea grass of the higher beaches while she worked at the torn nets and watched the blue strip of water beyond the Point for the sweep of a home-spread sail. Even when Caleb's boat had just cleared the harbor and her hands still twitched as she tried to weave the threads, her eyes would dream around the spot where she knew the masts would first loom above the dunes on Long Point. Maybe it was in those long waiting months that Jedediah's eyes began to look like his mother's, a misty revery about them, but seeing every dot that flecked the sea. And with the October's coming, when the cranberries were red drops in the brown bogs, Lucia would take him across the strip of land that held the sea from the little town, and while she gleaned the bogs he kept on the upper dunes where he could see the ships standing well out past the bars off Peaked Hills. And once as he watched there, glad, he did not know why, that the wind was strong over him, he saw a man in the high rigging of a ship, a small, dark, swaying thing against the taut white sails.

"Where are you?" Lucia cried out, starting suddenly. And when she turned about he pointed out to sea and laughed down to her:

"I'm in that riggin', reefin' the topsail!"

"You shan't! Never — never!" she cried to herself, as she bent to the gleaning again. But if your baby has slept in the dried sea grass and rolled among the nets and comes at last to watch, always, the ships go up and down and is glad when the wind flies strong, and does not know why, there is no use trying to hold him when his time comes. And Jedediah's time

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came soon enough, for when they came to tell Lucia that Caleb would never come back, she just said: "Yes, I know," and in a few weeks she died and left Jedediah to watch the ships alone. He went across the dunes, past the bogs where his mother had gleaned, and when he came to the sea his eyes saw nothing but a far white sail, no greater than his hand. He watched until it grew big, beating close inshore, and he could hear the scrape of the wind on her canvas.

"She's rigged outward bound, but she's making harbor," he said aloud. "She's coming for me!" And he turned to run all the way to the village to wait by the wharf until the boat came in. But when he asked to ship on her the captain of the whaler looked him over slowly with a careful noting of the lithe, boyish figure, and then a long stare into Jedediah's eyes.

"Can you keep your head and eyes by you?"

"Yes."

"Don't look it!"

"I can."

"Sign in, then. I put in here for another hand. One didn't show up at sailing. Didn't want a boy, but sign in." And Jedediah signed for a two years' cruise.

While the ship beat up the coast toward Davis Strait there was little work to do, and Jedediah could dream and grow solemn in the great new marvel of it all, and then laugh aloud because he was glad, and drag his bed up from below to lie under this new sky and take the swish of the sea and the purr of the wind on the sails into his sleep with him. But when they had entered the straits and the bay was nearing, there was too serious work to be dreaming. There were the long cold days at the masthead that grew suddenly pulsing hot at sight of a spouting whale. Then the great swing of the boat's pull to meet it; the craft and cunning of stealth, and the stifled joy in the danger of fight and capture. Sea-life was a rapturous life to Jedediah, and not even the heavy work, the murk and slime of the hold, the sickening smell of the boiling blubber, or the aching winds of the northern floes could take away the spell of it all that made him glad — glad — he did not know why. And so when the ship swept out from the bay again, flying before the ice that already stiffened the waves

off the headlands, Jedediah climbed into the foresail and said his farewell to Rowe's Welcome with a promise of return.

The ice had come early that year, or, maybe, the whales were shy, for the ship could not get her full cargo and ran down by the Azores to complete it, and made Amsterdam her market close to the ending of her first year. But Jedediah was afraid of that great strange thing at the end of the quays that was a city, where the sailors rioted at night, and the very children spoke a language he did not know, and he stayed by the ship when the work of the day was over, climbing the rigging to watch the lights that pricked the blackness into life, and to wonder about the people who drifted up and down the quays. And there he was even the last night before the ship dropped down the harbor on her return voyage. The mist was breathing in off the sea and Jedediah was thinking what queer faint trails the lights made in it, when, just below him on the quay, an English voice — a girl's, soft, supple, a little sob in it, — laughed out, dimpling the mist. Jedediah gripped the rope with tingling fingers and crouched to listen, for she was saying something, but he could not hear, and those with her cried out: "Oh, Betty!" and she laughed again, and Jedediah's pulses throbbed. He did not know a voice could hold such sound. It was long after they had passed into the city that Jedediah swung down to stand on the quay just where the girl's laugh had rung up to him.

"Betty," he whispered to the lights of the harbor. "One day I shall have a ship of my own and her name shall be Betty.

"Betty," he said to the wind that was driving the mist away, "Betty."

But it was nearly fifteen years before Jedediah had a boat of his own — the youngest captain in the fleet then. She was a three-master, schooner rigged and painted black. And because just "Betty" seemed too bold for other men to speak, Jedediah called her "Miss Betty," and had the name done in gold — where all the others were in white — and knew for the first time that through the years he had thought of gold hair when he thought of the girl who had laughed on the quays at Amsterdam.

"Miss Betty's" first voyage was into the straits for Arctic whale and Jedediah had not seen the headlands of Rowe's Wel-

come since his boyhood cruise. She was the last of the fleet to leave the bay that season, and with full cargo was running south again, well down the straits, when, in the lurid dawn, the man braced at the helm saw Jedediah slip from the rigging where he had climbed at midnight on some strange purpose of his own.

He came to stand by the helm, but did not speak for some moments, and when he did his voice was unsteady.

"Bring her — about!"

"What?" the man cried, and the helm slipped a point. They were running before the wind.

"Bring her about!" he said with steady voice. "We go back!"

But the man jammed the helm down and kept to the course, looking furtively about to see if any were near.

"I'm not daffy," said Jedediah, quietly, watching him, "but I've seen that thing that will take her back if she goes with me alone. Will you bring her about, or — " And cowed by Jedediah's eye, the man slowly shoved the helm over till the sails quivered and slacked and then jarred to the shock of the wind, head on, and the men were scrambling on deck with scared faces.

"Get to the ropes!" Jedediah yelled, and every man was in his place. And now she had to beat her way, and it was not until she was rushing free on the backward course that Jedediah called the men to him. His face was white, drawn, stern with big purpose, but over his eyes was the mist of revery that was over Lucia's, and his voice was full:

"Straight above us — maybe nigh Rowe's Welcome — full two days' run — a wreck is pounding on the reefs."

"Who spoke us?" someone cried out.

"No one spoke us!" Jedediah flung wide his arms. "I heard the slatting of her sails an' saw her. Her riggin's strewn across decks — her masts are gone, and men are clinging in the ropes and sails, and the wind off the floes is hard over them!"

The men were huddled together white-lipped. Jedediah crossed to the foremast and turned.

"I'm not daffy, men; bear me out. If we don't find her in two days — three — give me three — the oil is yours, an' your wage — I'll sign it."

A man stirred and held up his hand to let it drop again.

It was no simple superstition of the sea. Every sailor knew that such things were, and they would not dicker for oil with the man who had been sent the revealing. Jedediah climbed slowly to the masthead, the men crept back to their places, and "Miss Betty" rushed on into the north.

The days were short in the northern waters, and it was in the dimming light of the third noon that the far headlands of Rowe's Welcome showed off the port bow, and almost at the moment of sighting her, Jedediah's voice rang from the masthead. There were no words, just a great cry that cut the wind and brought the men clambering below him.

"Whar away?"

"Keep her off! She's broad on the lee bow," and the men swarmed up the ropes and then clung there agap, for across the sea that heaved and swung and dipped below them, lay a battered wreck, her masts gone, the rigging strewn across her decks and the pounding sea against her. But there was no sign of life over her, and Jedediah's orders came in a voice that lashed and bit them into quick action against the sullen weather. They kept off before the wind and then ran down close to the reefs, and the long boat put out with Jedediah and three men, though everyone had begged to go; and all the way he cautioned them what men became after days without water and food. But when they were close on her, and there was no answer to their shout, two of the men clambered up boldly by some trailing ropes, and then fell back and cried on God with horrid, distorted faces, and crouched by the gunwale, and Jedediah cursed them out of his way and stood up on the deck. And then he moved across it, without looking at what lay there, toward a tangle of sails and ropes, and the two men staring after him, saw a woman creep from the shelter of the sails and lift up her hands to him. She was gaunt with famine, but her eyes were clear and sane, and the great gold of her unbound hair was about her, and when she cried out to him with a little sob in her voice, Jedediah bent down and lifted her. "Betty," he said, "Betty."

A Break in the Circuit.*

BY XENO W. PUTNAM.

T was the last performance of the season, and Beppo's act was the last number on the program. Already signs of weariness had begun to crop out in the audience, but a buzz of admiration swelled up as this great king of beasts came majestically into the big performing cage and faced his trainer. Beppo had nearly killed the man only a few weeks previously, and his subsequent appearances before the public had been rare and greatly applauded, though it was a question with his keeper whether the applause was quite agreeable to him. This night he was very plainly out of humor, and at the very beginning of his act he balked.

Maxwell's shoulder was a little sore yet from the late encounter, and his imagination quite vivid. Still, he undertook to urge the dangerous brute by sharply cracking his whip. The lion only snarled at him, retreating a little, sullen and determined. Again and again the lash gave out its warning snap. Beppo's warnings were fully as vigorous and quite as easily understood.

Maxwell spoke a few hurried words to the watchful attendants outside the cage, and there was presently passed in to him a longer, heavier whip, a chair and a revolver. The latter he fired twice rapidly and then handed out through the bars again. Beppo cowered a little at the report, but did not budge an inch. Then the man advanced boldly into the centre of the arena, carrying the chair in front of him. The lion shifted about uneasily, circling at a safe distance, but without any show of repentance.

A hush fell upon the audience. It was evident to all that this was not a part of the acting, and it looked as if a crisis might be rather close at hand. The big brute was now between Maxwell and the cage door.

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Again Maxwell cracked his heavy lash, this time very near the beast's nose. It drew out Beppo's ire in the shape of another snarl and a spring at the whip. This added a good deal to the dramatic effect of the situation, but in every other respect the trainer might as well have snapped his finger. Plainly the man was getting somewhat apprehensive. Still, he was game, and perhaps a little angry withal. Again his lash shot out, and this time Maxwell's arm went with it far enough to carry it within landing distance. The point of the lash fell sharply upon the big monarch's nose. Royalty had been outraged, and with a roar the huge brute charged upon his antagonist. Maxwell seized the chair by the back and thrust it out in his opponent's face. The obstacle, slight as it seemed, stopped him and sent him circling about the cage, sullen and watchful. Again the lash just reached him, and again he charged, until checked by this simple barrier. Then Maxwell blundered, either through anger or excitement. With the brute so close to his defense he struck again, and this time a good deal more than the tip of the lash left its sting. Almost as it fell, the huge paw shot out and, with one sweep, struck the chair whirling from the trainer's hand. It crashed upon the floor, a mass of fragments, and exposed the man entirely to his infuriated foe.

There was a great cry of horror from the audience, quickly hushed by warning signs from the attendants. Then almost the stillness of death settled over the place as the people, strained and tense, watched those two antagonists face to face, so very near each other and about to begin a struggle that could only result fatally to the man. Maxwell stood rigid as a stone wall — he dared not move. The lifting of a hand at that moment would have launched that tawny death upon him instantly, but he kept his head and, possibly by his very coolness, delayed the impending onslaught. For one instant those two stood waiting, glaring at each other, motionless. Outside the cage an unerring marksman was noiselessly sighting a rifle at the big brute's head — a desperate alternative and almost surely a fatal one to Maxwell. Even if the bullet went true, the lion was nearly certain to crush him down in its death leap, but there appeared to be no other chance. Then, just as the sharpshooter was about to press the

trigger, while the lion seemed to almost hang suspended over Maxwell in his fatal spring, every light in the great tent went suddenly out. The electric current had failed.

The shock of this sudden plunge into blackest darkness at such a dramatic instant cut the cord of human control short off and there was something like a panic in the audience. This wild confusion outside the cage, following so closely upon the abrupt change from the light of noon-day to absolute night, probably disconcerted the lion somewhat for an instant and drew his attention, though once his equilibrium was restored, which would be very soon, the advantage of the changed conditions lay unquestionably with him. Maxwell, too, was startled by the change, but was so accustomed to dramatic situations that he was not too much disturbed to make the most of the diversion. Quietly, but quickly as he could, he began to move cautiously backward in what he thought was the direction of the cage door. Hope again returned to him.

He had nearly reached the door in safety, and was already wondering how he could notify the attendants of his presence without attracting the attention of his enemy when, with a roar of rage, the lion bounded forward. He had discovered his escaping prey. With safety almost in reach, but with his situation now a hundred times more desperate than before, Maxwell crouched back against the bars of the cage not two feet from the door and gave himself up for lost. At that instant every light burst forth again as suddenly as it had disappeared and with a shock almost as disconcerting. Beppo stopped short, bewildered and cowed by the sudden glare.

In a flash, with the returned light, the watchful attendants took in the situation. Quickly thrusting a temporary partition through the bars, between the lion and his prey, they tore open the door and dragged Maxwell outside, where he collapsed in a limp heap. Then they slammed the door shut again just as the furious beast, recovered from his confusion, came crashing up, determined still, but baffled.

The Glen Echo Mystery.*

BY WALTER WELLMAN.

[This story of Mystery, Adventure and Love, by Mr. Wellman, the famous Arctic Explorer, appeared in THE BLACK CAT just ten years ago. It is reprinted at the request of new and old readers, and in the hope that some one will write its equal.]

SIX months ago, through the death of a kinsman in Chicago, a lot of old pictures, furniture, bric-a-brac and papers came into my possession. Most of these things were stored away in the garret of my house. One day, having occasion to go to the storeroom, my attention was attracted to an old-fashioned, battered leather trunk. I had often thought of satisfying my curiosity as to its contents, but had never been able to find a key that would fit the lock. This day, however, it occurred to me that the ancient leather contrivance was of no value, and that a knife would do quite as well as a key; so I whipped out my pocket-knife and ripped a long slit in the leather top.

Within I found a large number of packets of old letters, account books and diaries, and all sorts of manuscripts and pamphlets. All these I tumbled out upon the floor, and looked through them in an idle way. At first I found nothing of unusual interest; but soon I came upon a packet of peculiar shape. It was apparently a sort of home-made envelope, composed of two pieces of old-fashioned blue linen paper folded and glued together. Upon the face of the packet was inscribed these words:—

Strictly Private
Never to be opened by anyone but me
Henry Stone.

This was the signature of my dead kinsman, and I suppose I should have respected his injunction; but I did not. My curi-

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osity was stronger than my reverence for the dead, so I slit open the packet.

Now I wish I had not done so. By prying into the secrets of the past, accidentally placed within my keeping, I have come face to face with a mystery which appalls me. For days and days and nights and nights I have turned it over in my mind, have looked at it from every point of view, have analyzed, searched, thought, imagined. But it has been all in vain. I am completely baffled. So are my friends to whom I have submitted the matter. Our combined ingenuity fails to afford a solution.

What I found within the packet of old blue linen paper was simply the following three cuttings from newspapers of long ago : —

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE AT GLEN ECHO.

POUGHKEEPSIE, Oct. 20. — The police officials here and detectives from New York are unable to throw any light upon the mysterious disappearance of Sylvester Baldwin from the house of our esteemed fellow townsman, Prof. Edwin Stone, who lives in the old Stone manor house at Glen Echo, one of the picturesque suburbs of this city. Mr. Baldwin strangely disappeared last Sunday night, and though diligent search has been made for him during the forty-eight hours that have elapsed, not a single clue has been obtained.

Mr. Baldwin's home is in Boston. He came here about two weeks ago to visit Professor Stone, who was his classmate at Harvard. A house party was given in his honor, and among the guests were Mr. and Mrs. George Jones, of Albany, Miss Irene Davidge, of New York, and Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, of Yonkers. Mr. Baldwin was about twenty-five years of age, and a rising young lawyer of Boston. He was unmarried, but it is whispered that he had become engaged since his arrival here.

Mr. Baldwin was in fine health and spirits. Almost every day the guests had indulged in picnics, boating excursions, fishing, horseback riding and other amusements. Mr. Baldwin was the life of the party with his vivacity, wit and love of fun. On many of these excursions it was impossible for Professor Stone to go, as it is well known that in his laboratory, located on the roof of the manor house, he is carrying on some very important experiments. When he felt compelled to remain in his workshop, Professor Stone designated Mr. Baldwin to act as his representative in the entertainment of the party.

Sunday last the ladies and gentlemen, accompanied by Professor Stone's aged mother, with whom he lives, attended divine services in the morning, and spent the afternoon in walks and drives. Toward evening, the weather growing colder, they all assembled in the big dining hall, where they made a rousing log fire in the old-fashioned fireplace. They had refreshments and music, and Mr. Baldwin's fine baritone voice was never heard to better advantage. About ten o'clock, after planning their excursion for the next day, all retired to their rooms on the second floor.

Mr. Baldwin was heard by Mr. and Mrs. Jones and by Miss Davidge, who

occupied adjoining rooms, to enter his chamber a few moments after they had reached their own apartments. He was whistling softly or humming an air, indicating the happy condition of his mind. He was also heard closing a window, and closing and latching the outside blinds. Between the apartment of Mr. Baldwin and that occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Jones there is a door, somewhat warped by time, and through the cracks and the big old-fashioned keyhole Mr. Jones heard Mr. Baldwin bounce into bed; but as the light in his room was not extinguished, as Mr. Jones noticed when he put out his own light and retired, the supposition is that Mr. Baldwin was reading in bed as was his habit before going to sleep.

From that moment not the slightest trace of the young lawyer has been secured. The last known of him, he was apparently lying in bed, reading, a happy man. Next morning he was not in his room. All his clothing and effects, save only the pajamas which he wore as a night robe, were in the apartment. He had disappeared as completely as if the earth had swallowed him up.

It is inconceivable that Mr. Baldwin suffered an attack of mental aberration and wandered away, for there had been a light fall of snow that evening and no tracks were found in it around the house. The barn and outbuildings, as well as every nook and cranny of the manor house, were carefully searched. The police looked into the haymows, and even lowered a man into the wells. They scoured the country around, but no one had seen or heard of a man wandering about in his pajamas. If Mr. Baldwin left the house, he went away without shoes, hat or clothing; and as cold weather has prevailed since his disappearance, it is almost inconceivable that he has not been forced to apply for shelter or food during the last forty-eight hours.

The detectives do not believe that Mr. Baldwin left the house. The morning after his disappearance the window blinds in his room were all found fastened on the inside. So, too, were the front door and the rear or kitchen door and side door of the house. All were locked, with the keys in place inside. The detectives have satisfied themselves that the fall of snow Sunday evening ceased about nine o'clock, and it would have been impossible for Mr. Baldwin to wander away, or be carried away, without leaving traces of footsteps.

But neither Mr. Baldwin living nor Mr. Baldwin dead is to be found in the house now. The search has been thorough from cellar to garret. Professor Stone's laboratory upon the roof has been thoroughly ransacked. As is known to our citizens, Professor Stone is engaged in investigations looking toward a new illuminating process and also in the water-proofing of fabrics. For these purposes he keeps upon the roof quite a collection of apparatus, retorts, gas generators, a large lot of fabric, some of which has been chemically treated, tools, fine instruments, etc. Professor Stone says he was in his laboratory hard at work the night his friend disappeared. No other member of the family or any of the guests heard Mr. Baldwin's steps that fateful night. Professor Stone insisted that the detectives should thoroughly search his laboratory. The officers opened the gas machines, sifted the cinders in all the retorts and overhauled all the piles of fabric. They found not the slightest trace of the missing man, dead or alive.

Professor Stone and all the members of his house party, so merry a few days ago, are bowed down with grief. They not only fear that Mr. Baldwin is dead, but they are overwhelmed by the mystery which surrounds them. They feel that they are living within the shadow of a tragedy which has not been explained and which thus far is wholly inexplicable.

MYSTERY PILED ON MYSTERY.

POUGHKEEPSIE, Oct. 22. — The mystery of the disappearance of Sylvester Baldwin is not yet cleared up. In fact, it grows deeper and darker. This morning a telegram was received from Saratoga. It read as follows: —

CHIEF OF POLICE, POUGHKEEPSIE: Body of man in night-clothes found last Monday morning at daylight by mail carrier on bridle-path in the Adirondacks about one hundred miles from here. What was date of your man's disappearance?

CITY MARSHAL.

To this Chief of Police Kipley replied, giving the date of Mr. Baldwin's disappearance, and adding: "Impossible same man."

Of course it is impossible, and yet it is a most strange and striking coincidence. Have two men disappeared in their pajamas during the past week? This most extraordinary development did not impress Chief Kipley as having any bearing upon the Baldwin case. When asked if there could possibly be any connection between the two incidents he replied: —

"It is absurd to think there was. Mr. Baldwin disappeared after ten o'clock Sunday night. Early next morning the body of a man was found in the Adirondacks, two hundred miles from here. There is no railway nearer than Saratoga. It is a journey of about two days from the place where the body was found to the nearest railway station, and that is by mounted courier. A wagon would need four days over those rough roads. It is a physical impossibility for the body of Mr. Baldwin to be carried to that remote point in the Adirondacks by next morning, and, therefore, we do not need to discuss this phase of the case any farther. The body found in the mountains is that of some other man."

Chief Kipley is undoubtedly right. Your reporter has ascertained that the only train for the north after Mr. Baldwin retired to his room was the midnight express, which does not make connections at Albany for Saratoga. The earliest possible arrival at Saratoga would have been at ten o'clock Monday morning, and that is still one hundred miles by a rough mountain road from the place where the body was found, according to the telegram, at daylight Monday morning.

Notwithstanding the utter impossibility of there being any connection between the two incidents, Miss Davidge, who has taken much

to heart the strange fate of Mr. Baldwin, has insisted that careful investigation be made of the Adirondack case. In this she is supported by Professor Stone, and by others at the Glen Echo house. Their anxiety is so great that they grasp at straws. Chief Kipley, to humor their strange whim, has agreed to send a man to the mountains to inquire carefully into the finding of the body there, though protesting that it is useless expense and trouble.

Chief Kipley is still convinced, as are all the detectives who have worked on the case, that Mr. Baldwin, living or dead, is still in the manor house. He has expressed his belief to Professor Stone, and the latter has insisted upon a more thorough search. In consequence, the old house has been nearly pulled to pieces. Partitions have been cut down, floors ripped out, walls opened, the floor of the cellar dug up, and the ashes and cinders in every furnace and stove, including the retorts in Professor Stone's laboratory, have been subjected to chemical analysis by Professors Tausig and Bruinier, of the Polytechnic School. The barns and outbuildings, strawstacks and wells, have all been researched. Every scrap of paper in Mr. Baldwin's rooms has been scrutinized. All the inmates of the house have been subjected to another examination, but without disclosing any new facts. Not a single trace of Mr. Baldwin or of the manner in which he left or was taken from his room, not even a shadow of a clue, has been discovered.

MR. BALDWIN'S BODY FOUND.

AN ASTOUNDING CASE.

SARATOGA, Oct. 26.—The body found in the Adirondacks a week ago this morning was that of Sylvester Baldwin, after all. It has been positively identified by Professor Stone, Mr. and Mrs. Jones and Miss Irene Davidge, who came here to view it, accompanied by your reporter. But instead of clearing up the mystery, this discovery has darkened it into one of the most inexplicable crimes of the century.

All we know now is that Mr. Baldwin is dead; that he disappeared from his room in the manor house at Glen Echo after ten o'clock Sunday night, the 18th inst.; that his body was found at daylight next morning two hundred miles away, a hundred miles from the nearest railway; and that he must have been foully murdered.

Detective Brown, who was sent by Chief Kipley to investigate the Adirondack case, reached Saratoga last Friday morning, and by hard riding over the mountain roads arrived at Cascadeville Saturday evening. There he found the body, which had been brought in from a point eight miles north. Mr. Brown closely questioned the mail carrier who had found the body about six o'clock Monday morning, on his way from Lake Placid. There was no doubt as to the day and hour, as these were attested by

the mail carrier, Daniel Givins, and by the authorities at Cascadeville, who had sent after the remains, and also despatched a courier to Westport with a telegram to the City Marshal of Saratoga.

When Givins came upon the body it was lying in the road. His horse was frightened by it. The remains lay in a sort of heap, and were not yet quite cold. The skull was smashed, the neck broken, and the head driven in toward the shoulders. Many bones in the body and limbs were broken, indicating that the remains may have been tightly packed in a box or crammed into a cask. The only clothing upon the corpse was a suit of silken pajamas, tied around the waist with a cord of the same material.

The deceased had never been seen in that region, nor was any one known to be missing. The population is sparse, and every tourist and sportsman is known along the trails to the guides, boatmen and innkeepers. No man could carry a human body to that remote spot save upon the back of a horse, and no mysterious horseman or other person was reported from any part of the district. The manner in which the body had made its appearance in the midst of the mountains was as much of a mystery to the people there as the means by which it had been removed from Poughkeepsie was to Detective Brown.

Detective Brown had known Mr. Baldwin, and as soon as he saw the body he was convinced of its identity. Accordingly he sent a courier with a telegram to Chief Kipley, and hired two men and two horses to help him carry the remains to Saratoga. They arrived here at three o'clock this afternoon, and there was a sad scene when our party from Poughkeepsie were admitted to the undertaker's rooms to view the body. Every one at once recognized in the broken and mangled mass of flesh handsome, manly Sylvester Baldwin. Professor Stone was greatly agitated when he beheld the features of his college chum and best friend, and Miss Davidge uttered a cry of pain and would have swooned had not Mrs. Jones led her away.

The face of the deceased is natural. In one of the front teeth is a gold filling just such as Mr. Baldwin had in one of his front teeth. The silken pajamas are precisely like Mr. Baldwin's, and, moreover, his initials "S. B." are embroidered upon a little linen tag under the neck. The name of the maker, a Boston firm, is there, too. Still stronger proof of the identity of the remains, if any were needed, is found in the fact that in a pocket of the pajamas was discovered a locket containing a miniature of Miss Irene Davidge.

There is, therefore, not the slightest doubt whatever that this is the body of Sylvester Baldwin. There can be no doubt, either, that he was murdered. But how and by whom? And above all, how was his body carried, in six or seven hours, some two hundred miles from his room in the manor house at Glen Echo to that lonely spot in the mountains, to reach which a journey of two days and nights is required, even under the most favorable circumstances?

It cannot be possible that the body which we have here is that of another man. It is beyond reason to suppose that there was a simultaneous disappearance of two men, both wearing silken pajamas exactly alike, the two men resembling one another in figure, face, color of eyes and hair, teeth and everything as closely as if they were twins, both bearing the initials "S. B." and both carrying in their pockets a miniature of Miss Irene Davidge, of New York.

Every one is greatly depressed, not only on account of Mr. Baldwin's sad fate, but by the inexplicable mystery surrounding the dreadful tragedy. The police and the detectives are without even a theory. The doctors and professors who have carefully examined the body and subjected parts of

its raiment to microscopic tests are without any explanation, however shadowy and unsatisfactory. Have the Black Arts been revived, or must	we ascribe this most extraordinary tragedy to the working of some modern miracle?

This is the strange story my curiosity had unearthed from the recesses of my dead kinsman's trunk. You will now see why I am sorry I disobeyed the injunction which I found written upon the blue packet. The tale which these old newspaper clippings tell has rung in my ears and whirled about in my brain, robbing me of sleep and making me nervous and restless. I have searched the old trunk again and again for further light upon it, but without success. I have had a feeling that somehow or other I must discover the dread secret, for this tragedy was in my family. Not only did it occur, or at least have its beginning, in the house of one of my kinsmen, but, now that the circumstances have been brought so strikingly to my attention, I recall that my relation, Professor Stone, married the Miss Davidge who figures in the story, lived with her in happiness for many years, and reared a fine family of boys and girls. Though I had never known either Professor Stone or his wife, Mr. Henry Stone, their brother, who left to my charge the fateful trunk, has told me of the professor's successful and useful career and happy home life.

But all my efforts have been unavailing. I am unable to find a clue or even to evolve a satisfactory theory. I can only give my readers the facts and leave them to struggle with the problem, as I have struggled.

. . . . . .

Postscript.—The foregoing was written some months ago. Meanwhile I have made strenuous efforts to throw off the strange fascination which this mystery has exerted upon me — to stop thinking and worrying about it; but to no purpose. It has continued to harass me. To-day, feeling more desperate than usual, I went up to the garret with a hatchet and a big knife, determined to cut the old trunk to pieces in order to discover if its shell contained any clue to the mystery. Underneath the lining in the bottom I found a letter apparently no more than five or six years old, which read as follows : —

San Francisco, June 20, 1892.

My dear Brother Henry:—I am writing this letter to you with my own hand, despite my physical weakness. It is the last letter I shall ever write to you, for I know my end is fast approaching. The doctor tells me I shall recover, but he cannot deceive me.

I have, as you know, led a busy, a useful, a successful life. My inventions have brought me distinction and reward. There is only one thing in my career which I regret, and even that does not fill me with much remorse. Once there came to me a moment in which all that life seemed to promise me — all happiness, success, and ambition — were involved in a struggle for mastery between two men — myself and another.

It is the law of nature that when two forces come in collision the weaker must give way. Nature has thus established the principle of the survival of the fittest, the dominance of the superior over the inferior. It matters not whether the struggle comes between planets or molecules, men or animals, nations or tribes, the law is the same. No man can be above the law of his being and his surroundings; it is his right and duty to work out his salvation within the sphere and under the principles which nature has ordained.

And yet in my case that which I had to do was extremely disagreeable. I had to remove a man from my pathway. One or the other had to suffer a most grievous loss, a fatal disappointment; and when this clash of interests came I had the right, under nature's laws, to defend myself. The man whose life crossed mine, and whom it was necessary for me to remove, was my best friend, and, for the moment, my guest. These circumstances added to the unpleasantness of my task, but did not deprive me of my right of self-preservation — a right which exists in every living thing, from the humblest to the highest, and whose exercise nature restricts only with limitations of power.

You may wonder, brother, why I write these words. I write them because it is not in my nature to die with my secret untold. All these years I have carried it alone, abso-

lutely alone. An impulse which I can neither describe nor control leads me to share my secret with just one human soul; and of course he can be none but you, my dearest friend and brother, who has shared all his secrets with me.

You will recall all the circumstances of the tragedy which happened at our house in Glen Echo shortly after I left college and while you were in Europe. We have often talked them over in the past, and you, like every one else, tried to solve the mystery. If you had only known what I knew!

I loved Irene Davidge before Sylvester Baldwin did. Before he and she met at our house I was passionately devoted to her. I made up the house party for the purpose of providing a good opportunity to press my suit, which I knew was not unpleasing. Before she returned home I had confidently expected she would be my promised wife. But from the first day she met Baldwin I knew my star was setting and his was in the ascendant. He was rapid and prosperous in his love-making, and I was forgotten. In a week they were lovers. One day I saw him kiss her as they stood behind some rose bushes in the garden. Had I not been a philosopher, a man of cool, calm reasoning, I should have killed him there and then.

But you know my self-possession, my absolute control of self, my favorite theory that he who can master himself can master the world. All that night I reasoned it out with myself. My conclusions, which to me then, as now, appeared logical, were as follows: —

1. Without her my life is ruined, as I know myself well enough to know I shall never love again.

2. If he lives she will be his, and I, the superior man in all save those superficial qualities which attract the other sex, shall be the loser in life's battle.

3. Nature has ordained that the superior shall triumph, and therefore I have the right to remove him from my way.

4. If I do remove him, in proper fashion, she will be mine, as she would have been mine had he not come between us. Therefore his removal will give me that which I must have.

Conclusion : I will remove him.

Action being determined upon, it only remained to decide the means. It was necessary that everything should be done in a prudent and orderly way. There must be no danger of discovery or even of suspicion being fastened upon me, for of course that would defeat the purpose in view. To obviate the possibility of pain or humiliation to our dear mother, or to you, my brother, was as much my duty as to protect the mind of Miss Davidge from being poisoned against me. Therefore it was necessary to proceed only after thorough consideration of all the possibilities. A minor point, but still one worthy of attention, was that I should not be compelled to do any actual butchering with my own hands, nor have any gruesome scenes about me. Even in this supreme moment, when I was successfully to work out my destiny or utterly ruin myself, I could not overlook the fact that I was a gentleman. Nor could I take the risk of employing a confederate.

In a few hours my plans were laid. I hope you will agree with me that they were laid with judgment, skill, and thoroughness, as became a man of science and self-possession. Fortunately I had in my laboratory all the materials needed for my operations. But there was much work to do. Day and night I toiled up there on the roof of the old house, where you and I afterward passed so many happy hours while perfecting my inventions. I absented myself as much as possible from the house party, in part because I could not endure seeing him and her together, and in part because I needed all the time for my preparations. During a period of one hundred hours I took only as much sleep as one ordinarily gets in twenty-four.

At last I was ready. I remember that it was Sunday noon, just after services, that I tested my work, reviewed all my calculations, and found that nothing had been neglected. After dinner in the evening I spent some time with the party in the dining-room, and the loving glances exchanged between Sylvester and Irene were more endurable to me than they had hitherto been. Excusing myself about nine o'clock,

I went upstairs. Entering Baldwin's room, I struck a match and found the book which he was engaged in reading. It was "Horace's Odes," from my library. I knew Sylvester's habit of reading for an hour before going to sleep — he formed it in college. Opening the volume to the bookmark, I turned over six pages and inserted there this note which I had prepared: —

Dear Sylvester: — If you are not too sleepy when you find this, come up to the laboratory. I have something important to show you. E. S.

I calculated that it would take him a quarter of an hour to read from his bookmark to my note, and I felt sure he would come, as he had displayed much interest in my experiments, and had complained because of late I had admitted him so rarely to the laboratory. My only fear was that, in the time which I had given him, not all of the other people in the house would be asleep, as I naturally did not want any one to know he had visited me. At the same time I dared not place the note farther on in the book, lest he should not reach it before falling asleep himself. Of course I could have deferred the removal till another night, but now wind and weather favored, and I courted no delays.

He came a few moments before eleven o'clock. I was ready for him.

"Sylvester," said I, "here is a machine I have built for experimental purposes, and I want you to help me test it."

"All right, Edwin," he replied; "what is it now?"

"A new gas-holder, made of silk," said I; "and here is some of the new gas. Take a good whiff of it — it is like wine in the nostrils."

He took the metal flask which I handed him, turned the cock, and in a moment or two fell insensible at my feet. I had filled the flask with a combination of chloroform and hydrogen, under pressure, and when the cock was turned a cloud of most powerful anæsthetic fumes burst into his face.

Now I was master of the situation. First I locked the door leading to the floor below. I noted with satisfaction that he had brought my note with him, thus saving me a per-

ilous trip down to his room after it. I burned it in my furnace. A look at the anemometer showed a wind movement of thirty miles an hour, and I was glad to see that the barometer was still falling. If it had been possible for a man of my temperament to have faltered in a set purpose, the sight of the locket containing Irene's portrait, which had fallen from the breast pocket of his pajamas as he fell, would have served to nerve me for my task.

With your knowledge of my thoroughgoing methods, dear brother, you will easily imagine how carefully I had planned everything. Sylvester's exact weight I had ascertained by a casual inquiry a few days before to be one hundred and fifty-three pounds. I assumed that he would come to me without stopping to dress, for he was hardy and athletic, and proud of his ability to endure exposure — an important point on account of the nicety of my calculations. The weight of the gas-bag was eighteen pounds, and of its lines and netting, five pounds; total, one hundred and seventy-six pounds. By careful test I had found the weight of my gas — it was nearly pure, dry hydrogen — was eighty thousandths of an ounce per cubic foot; and as air weighs one and two tenths ounces per foot, I had a net power of fully one and one-tenth ounces per foot. The gas-bag was spherical, and a little more than eighteen feet in diameter, giving it a capacity of three thousand one hundred and fifty cubic feet, equal to two hundred and seventeen pounds lifting force.

It was necessary to have a little margin, to compensate for loss of gas by leakage. Careful calculations of the rarity of the atmosphere at various altitudes showed me the bag with the burden would at first ascend to a height of about five thousand six hundred feet, where there would be an exact counterbalance of the weight of air displaced and the weight of the apparatus and its burden. Then it would slowly descend as the gas escaped from the bag. It was, of course, desirable that it should at first ascend to a great altitude, as that would prevent its being seen by any one who might be astir. It was quite as desirable that the whole machine should remain in the air at least six hours, that it might be carried a

proper distance away. At the same time, it must drop its burden before daylight — before any one could see it and perchance understand its dread significance.

It was highly important, too, from my view-point, that the body should be found sooner or later, and be unmistakably identified; otherwise Irene might take it into her pretty head to do the romantic by waiting year after year for the possible reappearance in life of her absent lover, which would be decidedly unpleasant for me. Hence I did not dare to arrange to send the apparatus out to sea, as I might easily have done. For the same reason I replaced in the pocket of Sylvester's pajamas the locket with Irene's miniature in it which had fallen from it.

It was absolutely necessary that the apparatus and its burden should not be found together, for in that case it would be easy to trace the two to a common source, — to wit, my laboratory, — thus defeating the purpose in view. To obviate this danger I had made careful experiments in the effect of various acids upon fibres, and was able accurately to determine the time in which a given quantity of diluted vitriolic acid would eat away a cord of given strength so that it would part under the strain of a weight of one hundred and fifty-six pounds. By this means I made sure that the apparatus and its burden should be separated before daylight, the latter to fall to earth, and the former, relieved of its incubus, to ascend to the skies and fly perhaps a thousand miles before coming down.

Such a cord, twisted with acid and timed to sustain the load just six hours, I tied about the waist of Sylvester and made fast to the netting underneath the gas-bag.

The moment had come. Carefully I looked all about from the roof to see that no one was watching my operations, and noted with satisfaction that the night was extremely dark and in all respects favorable to my purpose.

At quarter past eleven o'clock, Sunday evening, October 18, I took Sylvester's living right hand in mine and pressed it with a farewell greeting. Then with three rapid slashes of my knife I cut the guy-ropes, and my little balloon, with